

NUGSS FOOD BANK GUIDELINES

Preamble

The NUGSS Food Bank is an emergency food relief service for UNBC staff and students in need. The Food Bank purchases food and receives donations from a variety of individuals and businesses. The guidelines within this document have been constructed to ensure the safety of food moving through the Food Bank. Any deviations to these guidelines are considered exceptions, never common practices. Please note that these guidelines are based upon the guidelines set by the Greater Vancouver Food Bank and adapted for the NUGSS Food Bank.

Policy Statement

The NUGSS Food Bank works to ensure that food distributed in the community meets and/or exceeds established safety and quality standards. If you do notice items that do not meet these standards, when unpacked at home, do not cook or eat these items. Please contact the Food Bank immediately to inform us of the discrepancy so we may keep track (email nugss-foodbank@unbc.ca or call 250-960-6427).

We always encourage the practice: when in doubt, throw it out.

To Accomplish This, The NUGSS Food Bank Will:

1. Make sure that all relevant staff and volunteers working with the Food Bank have an understanding of the policies outlined in this document.
2. Ensure that all physical space and infrastructures are continually inspected and monitored to maintain cleanliness, adequate temperature controls, and safety.
3. Screen all potentially unsafe food (perishable and non-perishable items) prior to distribution to Food Bank visitors. This includes the examination of packaging for safety and a review of best before and expiration dates on potentially unsafe items and products.
4. Perform initial screening of all fresh fruits and vegetables upon receiving product. If, upon inspection, the majority of items appear to be spoiled, soft, or badly bruised they will be composted.
5. Follow all packing guidelines as they relate to potentially unsafe foods, such as dairy and meat products. Products which are received in a condition not in accordance with that indicated on the packaging will be disposed of.
6. Ensure that food is covered, and that packaging is in safe condition.

The NUGSS Food Bank Will Not Distribute:

1. Any food product that has exceeded the expiration date displayed on the product, excluding frozen items that are frozen before their best before dates.
2. Any canned goods where the can appears to be opened, swollen or bulging, leaking or has mold, has visible signs of rust or corrosion, or the label is missing or illegible.

3. Any dry goods (i.e., packaging involving cereal, coffee, pasta, rice, etc.) where there appears to be signs of a rip or tear in the inner packaging, there is visible water or moisture damage on the packaging or displays signs of chewing or pest infestation.
4. Any food product past its best before date according to our Best Before (BB) food distribution guidelines.
5. Any baked products, for example bread, that shows any visible signs of mold.
6. Any food item in a state outside of that outlined on the manufacturers packaging, for example, any frozen food product that has thawed.

Best Before (BB) Food Distribution Guidelines

Foods past their **best before dates are safe to eat**. Please refer to the handy guidelines for information about how long past a best before date an unopened food item is safe to consume. Please note, we always encourage:

- Visual inspections in addition to the BB food distribution guidelines.
- To never taste food that looks or smells strange. Throw it out.

Product	Examples	Dry	Refrigerated	Frozen
Baked Items:				
Bread Products	Bagels, sliced bread, hot dog buns,		N/A	90 days
Fruits and Vegetables:				
Fresh Fruit and Vegetables	Fresh uncut fruits and vegetables, frozen cut fruit bags, frozen vegetables		30 days	180 days
Fresh Cut Fruits and Salads	Fresh cut fruits and vegetables, salad mixed bags		14 days	N/A
Juice	Juices, Smoothies	N/A	10 days	
Dairy:				
Fresh Plant Protein	Tofu, Daiya cheese, Yves protein	N/A	3 days	90 days
Milk and Alternatives	Milk, almond milk, butter, creams, coffee creams	N/A	3 days	N/A
Yogurt	Yogurt, probiotics, sour cream, yogurt drinks	N/A	14 days	N/A
Eggs	Eggs, egg whites, liquid eggs	N/A	35 days	N/A
Cheese	Soft/Hard cheese, cream cheese	N/A	14 days	90 days
Snacks	Hummus, deli meats, dips, dairy based, Kraft trays with meat, Kids' snack trays	N/A	2 days	N/A

Meats:

Hamburger and other Ground Meats	Hamburger, ground beef, turkey, veal, pork, lamb, and mixtures of them	N/A	2 days	3 to 4 months
Beef, Veal, Lamb, and Pork	Beef, veal, lamb, and pork steaks, chops, and roasts	N/A	3 days	4 to 12 months
Poultry	Chicken or turkey, whole	N/A	1 to 2 days	1 year
Poultry	Chicken or turkey, pieces	N/A	1 to 2 days	6 months
Bacon	Bacon	N/A	1 week	1 month
Sausages	Sausage, raw/fully cooked, from chicken, turkey, pork, or beef	N/A	1 to 2 days	1 to 2 months
Pre Packaged Meals	TVdinners	N/A	N/A	3 to 4 months
Sandwiches	Sandwiches and wraps with/without meat	N/A	1 day	N/A

Seafood:

Lean Fish	Cod, flounder, halibut, tilapia, basa	N/A	3 to 4 days	6 months
Fatty Fish	Salmon, tuna	N/A	3 to 4 days	2 months
Scallops and Shrimp	Scallops, shrimp	N/A	1 to 2 days	2 to 4 months
Sushi	Including sushi with raw fish	N/A	1 day	N/A

Canned Foods:

Canned Foods	Canned Vegetables, canned beans, canned soups, canned pasta sauce, canned meat, canned fish and seafood	18 months	N/A	N/A
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Wet and Dry Beverages:

Water and Pop	Still and natural carbonated, no additives, flavored water, club soda, pop, bottled water	18 months	N/A	N/A
Hot Beverages	Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, ovaltine	18 months	N/A	N/A
Fruit and Vegetable Juice	Vegetable, fruit, or vegetable and fruit juices with puree as the first ingredient	12 months	N/A	N/A
Dairy and Milk Alternatives	Almond milk, powdered milk, coconut milk in tetra, rice milk	3 months	N/A	N/A

Baking Supplies:

Nut Butters	Almond butter, peanut butter, soy butter, sunflower seed butter	12 months	N/A	N/A
Baking and Cooking Supplies	Cake mixes, jam, ketchup, mustard, relish, salsa, sugar, spread, flour, honey, spices, salt, dips	12 months	N/A	N/A
Mayonnaise	Mayonnaise	4 months	N/A	N/A
Salad Dressings	Creamy dressings, salad dressings	2 months	N/A	N/A

Snacks, Grains, and Side Dishes:

Snacks	Confectionary, crackers, dried fruit, granola bars, nuts and seeds, trail mixes	12 months	N/A	N/A
Plain Grains	Quinoa, rice, millet, couscous	18 months	N/A	N/A
Grain and Potato Side Dishes	Boxed rice or pasta with added ingredients, dry soups, taco shells, instant mashed potatoes	18 months	N/A	N/A
Plain Pasta	Egg noodles, lasagna, plain macaroni, penne, plain noodles, rice noodles, spaghetti	18 months	N/A	N/A
Breakfast Cereals	Boxed cereals, oatmeal, instant oatmeal, prepackaged hot and cold cereal	12 months	N/A	N/A
Baby Items and Supplies	Baby food, cereal, formula, baby wipes, misc. baby items	Expiry Date	N/A	N/A
Adult Supplements	Boost, ensure, protein bars/drinks, supplements, vitamins	Expiry Date	N/A	N/A

References:

<https://www.ams.ubc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/AMS-of-UBC-Food-Bank-Food-Distribution-Guidelines-1.pdf>
<https://www.foodsafety.gov/food-safety-charts/cold-food-storage-charts>
<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/publichealth/foodsafety/chill.aspx>
https://foodbank.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Food-Distribution-Guidelines-2020_jun2020.pdf*